

U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

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PRESS RELEASE

July 28, 2004

RE: UNITED STATES v. JUAN CRUZ, et al.

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle, announced today the filing of a criminal complaint, charging 13 individuals with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, crack cocaine, and heroin, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846. Charged in the complaint are the following individuals: JUAN CRUZ a/k/a CARLITO, age 27; CHRISTINA COLLAZO, age 24; ALICIA DIAZ, age 53; DANIEL MARQUEZ a/k/a DANNY, age 29; BENJAMIN RIVERA, JR. a/k/a JUNITO, age 25; PETER SANTOS, age 33; STEPHANIE EKISS, age 33; TANYSHA ROSADO a/k/a TANYA a/k/a TANI, age 23; AMANDA PIECH, age 27; CARLOS L. JIMENEZ a/k/a CARLITO, age 32; and ANA RIVERA, age 59. Each face a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment, a fine of \$1,000,000.00, or both. Also arrested was PEDRA GUZMAN, age 55, was arrested and charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(1) all of Buffalo, New York. Each face a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, a fine of \$259,000.00, or both. It should be noted that the fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime . . . is merely an accusation and

the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. (**Disciplinary Rule 7-107(B)(6)**).

Assistant U.S. Attorney James P. Kennedy, Jr. stated that the Indictment charges the defendants with operating a drug ring which secured substantial quantities of narcotics from New York City and elsewhere. Those drugs were, in turn, returned to Buffalo, where they were distributed throughout the City. Furthermore, DEA agents in New York City, as part of this investigation also today arrested several individuals who were responsible for supplying drugs to those charged in Buffalo. Those individuals will be prosecuted in federal court in New York City.

The criminal complaint was the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Drug Enforcement Administration Buffalo Task Force consisting of the following agencies: Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Police Department, Buffalo Police Department, Erie County Sheriff's Office, New York State Police, Niagara County Sheriff's Department, Cheektowaga Police Department, Niagara Falls Police Department, the Cattaraugus County Sheriff's Department, and the FBI Career Criminal Task Force. Assisting with the arrests of the defendants were the U.S. Marshal's Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the Orchard Park Police Department, the Orleans County Sheriff's Department, the West Seneca Police Department, the Wellsville Police Department, the New York State Division of Parole and the Lackawanna Police Department.

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